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AUTHOR Grippin, Pauline C.
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ABSTRACT

This paper is a review of literature examining the definitions of cooperating teacher, college supervisor, master teacher, mentor, and recommended selection criteria in light of new teacher certification requirements in New York State for a full-year internship. Given the lack of clear role definitions, unintegrated research findings, and traditional patterns of student teacher-mentor relationships, the idea of teacher mentors for such interns does not seem to hold much promise. Forty-six references are listed. (Author)

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Pauline C. Grippin
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This paper is a review of literature examining the definitions of cooperating teacher, college supervisor, master teacher, mentor, and recommended selection criteria in light of new teacher certification requirements in New York State for a full-year internship. Given the lack of clear role definitions, unintegrated research findings, and traditional patterns of student teacher - mentor relationships, the idea of teacher mentors for such interns does not seem to hold much promise.

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The new New York State regulations for the permanent certification of teachers requires a one-year internship in teaching beyond the student teaching experience. This internship experience is not yet defined by the educational community, but the New York State Education Department has indicated that the options include both college directed and school district directed internships. This inherent flexibility raises the questions of what the experience should be and who should be accountable. The most frequently proposed answers to these questions are that the experience should include paid employment, mentoring by an experienced teacher, and constructive evaluation.

Each of these elements poses complex questions. This paper will primarily address the issue of mentoring. The need for a clear definition of the role of mentor permeates the literature on both preservice and inservice teacher education (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Clark & Zummer, 1989; Corcoran & Andrews, 1988; Gehrke, 1988; Healy & Welchert, 1990; Little, 1990; Wildman, Magliaro, McLaughlin & Niles, 1990). How is this definition related to the definitions of cooperating teacher, college supervisor, and master teacher? Is educational research supportive of the role definition? What should the mentee/mentor relationship be? How should mentors be selected? Serious questions, the answers to which will shape a major step in the certification process.

Definitions

Two traditions impact the definition of mentor in education. One source of information comes from outside education, from other professions/businesses in which mentoring has been a long-standing practice. The other source includes the history and definition of roles in education that have had an appearance, at least superficially, of mentoring activities: cooperating teacher, master teacher, college supervisor of student teaching.

While mentoring in the professional/business world may seem an appropriate model for education, the differences are significant (Ciervo, 1987: Healy & Welchert, 1990; Little, 1990). In the professional/business world, mentoring involves a serendipitous, voluntary relationship between an already successful person and another whom the successful person perceives to have the potential to

be successful. The mentor brings the mentee into the network of power brokers and advises the mentee on career choices, as well as "tricks of the trade." At some point in the relationship, the mentee becomes professionally independent of the mentor, moving on to another mentor or to become a mentor oneself.

In education, although beginning teachers are often "taken under the wing" of an experienced teacher, the dynamics of the relationship are quite different from that in the business world. Both personally and organizationally, teachers are seen as autonomous peers, a horizontal structure that limits the degree to which one teacher can truly "bring along" another teacher in the sense of career advancement (Little, 1990; Rowan, 1990). A more significant difference, however, is the idea of mandated mentorships in education. Successful mentorships in the business are voluntary and private. Each partner must perceive the benefits to them of the relationship and must find the other person compatible. No outside agency is involved. The partnership can be dissolved if either person so desires without any fanfare or public scrutiny. Mandated mentorships within educational internships violate most of these principles.

Additionally, relationships between experienced (or expert) teachers and beginning (or novice) teachers have a long history in teacher education. The traditional roles of cooperating teacher and college supervisor, plus the more recent experimentation with the role of master teacher, cloud the definition of mentor teacher. A digression into the research literature concerned with these roles will illuminate the complexity of defining "mentor."

Cooperating Teacher

The cooperating teacher has been identified repeatedly by the research as the most important and influential factor in the teacher training experience (Broadbelt & Wall, 1985; Funk, Long, Keithley & Hoffman, 1982; Haberman, 1983; Koehler, 1986; Kuehl, 1984; Seiferth & Samuel, 1984; Zimpher, de Voss & Nott, 1980). Cooperating teachers influence the student teachers' attitudes, skills, philosophy of education, and entrance into the social world of the school (Kuehl, 1984). Cooperating teachers typically demand immediate proficiency, therefore forcing student teachers to emphasize classroom management over all else (Soares, 1989).

Goodlad (1984) (often quoted by others) pointed out the reality that teacher training institutions have not been selective in choosing cooperating teachers, relying instead on school personnel to make the selection. Pierce (1990) reported that cooperating teachers are concerned that they do not understand their role very well and have doubts about their ability to perform satisfactorily. Other research

reflects the idea that since cooperating teachers are so important they should be trained (Balch & Balch, 1987; KIllian & McIntyre, 1986; Morehead, 1987; Thies-Sprinthall, 1984). Models for training cooperating teachers include such things as instruction in clinical supervision and attempts to increase their cognitvie developmeent level. There is little evidence that such programs are successful in improving either the quality of the cooperating teachers or the future effectiveness of the student teachers.

Because the pervasive influence of cooperating teachers is recognized, many teacher educators have espoused the use of selection criteria (Ervay, 1982; Kuehl, 1984; Sparks, 1987). The lists include such characteristics as certification, successful experience, Master's degree, subject matter expertise, appropriate temperament, good organization skills, articulated philolsophy of education, good role model, willingness to be a cooperating teacher, and has clear understanding of the teacher education program goals. How close is this to a definition of "mentor teacher"?

ICollege Supervisorl

Zimpher, de Voss and Nott (1980) describe the roles given to college supervisors by both cooperating teachers and student teachers. Supervisors
are expected to set the goals and expectations for the student teaching experience, to sequence the experience from observation to full teaching, and
to provide constructive criticism. In actual practice, supervisors may be inhibited from carrying out these role expectations. Cooperating teachers have unrealistic expectations of the skills and abilities of college supervisors (Martin & Wood, 1984). Programs may not allow enough supervisor time to effectively perform.

Although supervisors provide an important communication link between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher, this duo is often aligned against the supervisor's teacher education point of view. Cooperating teachers have more influence on student teachers than supervisors do (Haberman, 1983; Koehler, 1986). Both cooperating teacher and student teacher want to move the student teacher into a full teaching schedule before the supervisor would recommend it. The student teacher also quickly adopts the socialized "education courses are worthless" attitude of the cooperating teacher. In addition, the cooperating teacher is often threatened by the supervisor's constructive criticism of the student teacher, since the cooperating teacher has often suggested the criticized practices (Zimpher, de Voss & Nott, 1980).

The charge of teacher educators to supervisors is to encourage reflection and problem-solving behaviors in their student teachers (Beach & Reinhartz, 1989; Boldt & Housego, 1986; Kagan, 1988; Zimpher, de Voss & Nott, 1980). In spite of the supervisors role as

representative of the teacher education program, Boldt and Housego (1986) report that college supervisors give "craft" rather than "research" recommendations to their student teachers. The emphasis on Ihow@ rather than Iwhy@ leads to teaching as technology at a time when the national trend is to view teaching as a complex, decision-making profession. While some work reports that supervisors do not encourage reflection (Kagan, 1988), other studies find that even when supervisors try to encourage reflection, they are unsuccessful (Lucas & Rudduck, 1990; Zimpher, de Voss & Nott, 1980). The typical practice of utilizing persons with teaching experience and little else to recommend them for supervisors is not conducive to good supervision. Many supervisors do not even understand the fundamental procedures of supervision, the philosophical basis of the teacher education program they represent, or the theory and research their student teachers are supposed to be operating from.

How should the research on the role of the college supervisor inform our definition of "mentor teacher"?

IMaster Teacher@

Griffin (1985) reviewed the literature on the master teacher concept and called for an unambiguous definition of the role. He suggested that two approaches are possible: (1) Master teachers do more than other teachers in the areas of curriculum development, committee work, and so forth; (2) Master teachers are better teachers than other teachers as measured by student outcomes. He recommended the "more than" approach to the role, since "better than" is too divisive. The extended discussions in the literature of the early 1980's regarding merit pay based on a master teacher concept certainly support his contention. Career ladder approaches were abandoned by most school districts when appropriate and acceptable definitions of master teacher were not forthcoming (Freiberg, 1984/85).

Greene (1985), taking a philosophical approach to definition, called for the master teacher to be one who is not identified by student achievement, but rather by the teachers' ability to help their students become "moral agents" in their own learning - making wise choices about what to learn and able to move beyond the basic curriculum independently.

Rowan (1990) pointed out that school organization exerts a very strong influence on what the role of any teacher can be. Schools that have adopted the effective schools model reinforce teacher behaviors related to increasing student achievement in basic skills; therein, master teachers are technocrats. Schools embracing the newer conception that teaching is a nonroutine behavior look for innovation and problem-solving behaviors. Griffin (1985) also pointed out that the nature of the practice of teaching must inform the definition of master teacher; however, he cautioned against reducing teaching to what

has been found to be effective by educational research of the process/product kind. In addition to interactions with students, teaching involves planning, knowledge of students in general and in particular, interactions with parents and other adults, and professional and personal development. Doyle (1986) enumerated the dimensions of the classroom setting which require a teacher adept at spontaneous decision-making: multidimensionality, simultaneity, immediacy, unpredictable and public classroom climate, and history. In this model, the master teacher makes wise decisions informed by both practice and pedagogical knowledge.

What model of teaching should permeate the definition of "mentor teacher"?

|Mentor (for beginning/novice teachers)|

Given the prior discussion of role definitions for cooperating teacher, college supervisor and master teacher, it is not surprising that many have found the role definition of mentor equally ambiguous (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Clark & Zummer, 1989; Corcoran & Andrews,
1988; Gehrke, 1988; Healy & Welchert, 1990; Little, 1990; Wildman, Magliaro, McLaughlin & Niles, 1990). When "mentor" is clearly defined, it runs the gamut from listing task categories (Wildman, Magliaro, McLaughlin & Niles, 1990) to framing a theoretical model based on developmental-contexual variables (Healy & Welchert, 1990).

This continuum is an inevitable outgrowth of the available educational research support available. As noted above, three different strands of research in teacher effectiveness lead to different conceptions of what the master teacher should be able to do. Process/product research suggests a means-ends set of strategies directly related to student achievement in basic skills. The nature of teaching approach describes the complexity of the job and calls for wise decision-makers (reflective teachers). The more philosophical approach addresses ends related to moral and personal priorities, asking for student outcomes that relate to ethical behavior and higher-order thinking skills. If the mentor is to exemplify the desired outcome for the mentee, what set of behaviors should be modeled and learned? And what form of transmission should be prescribed?

In a Virginia study of mentoring, Wildman, Magliaro, McLaughlin & Niles (1990) used the categories of (1) getting students to cooperate, (2) instruction, (3) administrative tasks, (4) parents, and (5) school working environment to assess the working relationship between mentors and mentees. They found varying degrees of directness across their sample, but the majority of the mentors were directive, suggesting a superior/subordinate relationship existed, at least in

the minds of the mentors. Corcoran and Andrews (1988) use the term "cooperating teacher", but describe their ideal cooperating teacher as a mentor, able to work with university faculty in a collaborative mode, having major responsibility for pedagogical instruction, and willing to give interns "freedom to develop." Healy and Welchert (1990) envision mentoring as a reciprocal relationship that benefits both parties, eschewing a subordinate role for the mentee.

There is a very strong tradition of equal status and autonomy among teachers (Griffin, 1985; Little, 1990; Rowan, 1990). Teachers are used to working in isolation. When they do talk to each other, they talk about students, materials and discipline. They do not talk about teaching strategies, goals or curriculum (Rowan, 1990). They are uncomfortable about evaluation, feeling that checklist approaches to assessing the effectiveness of a lesson are inappropriate (McNeal, 1987). Little (1990) points out that if evaluation is part of the job description of the internship mentor, this "violates" the norm of equal status. However, one aspect of the impetus for internship experiences in the certification process is decidedly to evaluate (read "weed out") beginning teachers.

Selection Criteria

Given the ambiguity of the definition of role of mentor, the differential educational research support for diverse conceptions of effective teaching, and the uncertainty about what the mentor/mentee relationship should be, determining selection criteria for mentors is problematic, to say the least.

Suggestions in the literature for criteria for selecting master/mentor teachers include:

-able to deliver curriculum in ways that allow all children to learn (Doyle, 1985)

-able to communciate their deliberations to others (Doyle, 1985)

-deliberate thinkers (Zumwalt, 1985)

-embraces cultural transmission, skills training, fostering natural development, promoting conceptual change (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1989)

-helpful characteristics include: willingness to serve, sensitive, not authoratative, emotionally committed, diplomatic, able to anticipate problems, nurturant/encouraging, timely, keeps confidences, likes teaching, good role model (Wildman, Magliaro, McLaughlin & Niles, 1990)

-interest in professional development skills, wants to learn about curriculum development, wants to work with other teachers, has a broad perspective on goals of schooling (Klein, 1985)

-professional maturity (Healy & Welchert, 1990)

-ability to state goals, strategies, and provide

cogent rationales for same (Cangolesi, 1986)

While the intent of the above criteria may be laudable, establishing measurement criteria to validly assess them is rarely mentioned. Selecting master/mentor teachers is still largely a paper trail; schools and colleges rely on completion of educational and certification requirements, subjective assessment of related activities, and interviews. Coughlin (1986) reminded us that selection has enormous potential for bias: political, sexual, racial. Allen (1986, p. 39) wrote " the concept of master teacher as mentor is wishful thinking."

If the success of the new requirement for a full-year internship rests on the concept of induction by a mentor teacher, the prognosis is not favorable. Given the lack of clear role definition, unintegrated research findings on effective teaching, and traditional patterns of student teacher - mentor relationships, the selection of mentors can only be a trial and error process with little chance for successful outcomes. The energies of the educational community should be directed toward discovering or uncovering another approach with more potential for improving education.

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